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The BLUE JAY

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of the
YORKTON NATURAL HISTORY
SOCIETY

In Co-operation with
The Saskatchewan Provincial Museum

Vol. 4 (1)

THE BLUE JAY
The official organ of the Yorkton Natural History Society

Editor - Isabel M. Priestly

Officers - Honorary President: L.T. McKim, K.C., Melville, - President: Mrs. I. M. Priestly - Vice-President: J.R. Foreman - Secretary-Treasurer: Miss Ruth Beck - Directors: Miss Pauline Summers, Miss Gladys Fraser, Cliff Shaw, Vernon Barnes.
The annual membership fee: FIFTY CENTS, payable October first each year, which includes four quarterly copies of the "Blue Jay".

President's address - 40 Agricultural Ave., Yorkton, Sask.
Secretary's address - 33 Fourth Ave., Yorkton, Sask.

During the past summer a number of new members have joined our "Blue Jay" circle and to them, as we start Volume 4, we should like to extend a most hearty welcome. We have always tried to present material in the "Blue Jay" in an informal manner, just as if two or three nature lovers had got together and were exchanging experiences. At the same time we have always tried to present facts which are scientifically correct.

In the past we have often stressed the value of accurately reported records, and this will now apply even more than ever. In the future all reports sent in to the "Blue Jay" will be filed for the use of the Provincial Museum so that possibly some naturalist years hence may be using the records of our "Blue Jay" members to gain a picture of 20th century wildlife in Saskatchewan.

In view of this I would particularly ask members to invest in the note book I advocated a year ago at this time. Even after so short a space of time as one week it is often difficult to remember the exact day on which some incident happened. A pad of paper hung up in the kitchen, or an easily accessible notebook prevents this possibility. And one more thing, will members please send reports as soon as observed - just jot them down and send them in. Often an unsuspected trend may be brought to light by this means.

I would also like, on behalf of outside members, to introduce our new secretary-treasurer, Ruth Beck. She is a sister of Harvey Beck, one of the retiring officers of last year. Miss Beck has always been keenly interested in the welfare of the "Blue Jay", and is a member of the Wild Flower Conservation Committee.

Many thanks for all the nice letters received during this last year. I hope I have answered them all.

Isabel M. Priestly,
President,
Yorkton Natural History Society.

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REPORT ON THE WESTERN RED LILY

The Red Lily, Saskatchewan's Floral Emblem, staged a brave comeback this season. From widely separated points in the province came reports of "hundreds blooming where in recent years there had been but an odd stray blossom." And it may also be noted that no subject discussed in the "Blue Jay" has brought such a response in the way of letters. There is no doubt that many nature lovers are deeply concerned over the future of our provincial flower emblem.

Evidently the dry years had a great deal to do with the scarcity of the Red Lily, and, this should be noted carefully, it has taken all this time for it to become re-established. A report received from Mrs. F. Bilsbury, Grenfell, seems typical of what took place in many districts. "We have a spot on our farm", she writes, "where lilies grow. It is quite a large area on the west side of a big hay slough, lying between two clumps of trees. Part of the lily-covered land runs nearly into the slough. During the years 1919 - 1929 this spot of ground was a flaming mass of lilies. Then came the drought years and the lilies grew less and less until there was not one to be seen. However, to our great joy, in 1940 a few appeared in the old spot, increasing in numbers each season, and it is now a mass of bloom again."

Many correspondents commented on the large size of the lilies this season and several reported two or more flowers on the one stem being quite common. One letter told of "eight perfect blooms on one stem."

Reports also came in of yellow-flowered Red Lilies of which Lad. Martinovsky, Gerald, was asking in the last issue of the "Blue Jay". In 1944 two lilies, each with two lovely yellow flowers with deep crimson spots, were discovered on the Bilsbury farm at Grenfell. These yellow lilies came back again this year and showed an increase in numbers. M. G. Street found a yellow-flowered lily north of Nipawin. "It was not", he said, "the bright yellow of a dandelion but it did stand out so that I spotted it far back from the road." And A. O. Aschim, Hudson Bay Junction, wrote of finding a lily in 1940 which was "a pure golden yellow with darker gold blotches on the inside of the flower." Mr. Aschim put a peg by the plant so he could find it again and move the bulb in the Fall. However, some campers happened along and that was the end of the lily. He has never seen another although he has noted some showing a faint trace of yellow.

Most of our correspondents expressed a desire to help in the protection of the Red Lily. The question now is, what shall be done?

The Regina Natural History Society and our Yorkton Society have set up a joint committee and will consider ways and means this winter. The most commonly made suggestion is "Do something in the schools". This is an excellent idea, but often it is the family party "out for a run in the country", who, quite thoughtlessly, are the worst offenders in destroying our native wild flowers. Mrs. E. B. Flock stressed a significant fact in a recent article in the "Leader Post" when she pointed out how far more abundant the Red Lilies are along the railway right of ways than along the public highways. In British Columbia the picking of the Flowering Dogwood is prohibited within a given distance of the highways. Can we in Saskatchewan attain the same end with regard to the Red Lily by education and publicity, rather than by legislation?

BIRD NOTES

Bluebirds We have had several reports of Bluebirds this summer, among which was the following interesting note from Mrs. J. Hubbard, Grenfell. "You may remember," she writes, "that we had an Eastern Bluebird nesting in a cardboard box, which my husband nailed up inside our granary in 1944, over a hole made by a woodpecker. This year a pair of Mountain Bluebirds nested in the same box and today (June 20) the young ones were out in the rain. Unlike their Eastern cousins, who were very unobtrusive, these Mountain Bluebirds were quite friendly and always around." Another member pointed out that Bluebirds seem to stay in family groups, the male birds caring for the first brood of young when they leave the nest, while the female sits on another clutch of eggs - then all move away together.

Cliff Swallows Cliff Swallows are rarely noted in the Yorkton-Melville area and their curious mud nests are even more rarely seen. This season, however, L.T. McKim, K.C. was told of a colony of some twenty nests built under the eaves of a new, unpainted barn 10 miles north of Melville. Mr. McKim also reported that three pairs of Cliff Swallows had nested against the walls of a stucco house in Melville. This last report is of special interest as two years ago, in the spring of 1943, a flock of about thirty Cliff Swallows visited Melville and "daubed mud in fifteen or twenty places on the wall of this particular house and even partly built two or three nests and then as suddenly vanished." In Yorkton this summer we discovered Cliff Swallows at the farm of Stanley Wood. On July 20, one nest built against Wood's house contained young, but, of some half-dozen nests on the barn, three had been taken over by English Sparrows--a clear demonstration of one of the main causes of the decrease of the Cliff Swallow in the West.

Bobolinks In her nature column in the "Saskatchewan Farmer" for July 15, Mrs. Marion Nixon states "the most remarkable increase in bird population that I have noted this year is in the Bobolinks. Before the dry years we used to see the odd Bobolink each spring, but for some years I did not see one....then this year, to our great surprise and delight, we found not one pair, but five, nesting on a portion of a hay pasture just across the road from our house. The Bobolinks kept fairly close together and often two would be seen singing on the same clump of willow shrub. Their song is infinitely more beautiful than the "Bobolink, bobolink, spink, spank, spink" of a familiar poem.

Birds and Colour Mrs. M. Heron, Yorkton, had a curious experience with birds apparently showing a reaction to colour. In her garden she had a bird bath which attracted the usual gathering of summer visitors, such as robins, yellow warblers, wrens, etc. Early in June she decided to paint the bird bath a bright blue. And the result? Not a single bird came near it except finally a few odd English Sparrows. So, missing the companionship of her former friends, she repainted the bath white, and immediately all her guests came back and everything was happy in the garden once again!

Nighthawks Birds find strange spots to their liking as nesting sites. The Nighthawk builds no nest, but lays its eggs on the bare ground or on the gravelled roofs of city buildings. In Yorkton this year one of these birds found that the covering of stone chips on a grave in the cemetery was just to her choice. This particular grave lies parallel to one of the main paths but the Nighthawk was such a close sitter that numbers of people must have passed by the grave and never noticed the crouching bird.

Sparrows Nest in Hawk's Nest In the last issue of the "Blue Jay" we reported finding a nest of the English Sparrow built in the underside of a Swainson's Hawk's nest at Rousay Lake, Yorkton, and remarked that "as far as we knew Swainson's Hawk's was the only nest utilized in this way." What we should have said was, "the only nest so utilized while the original occupants are still in possession." As several of our members were quick to point out, many birds make use of the abandoned nests of other species. In any case, we were wrong on all counts!

This spring Bill Carrick told us of seeing what he believed was the nest of a Red-tailed Hawk, at Leech Lake, with the nest of an English Sparrow in the underside. This hawk's nest was in a bluff on the west side of the lake. J. H. Wilson, fieldman for Ducks Unlimited, and his son, Bill, visited it late in June and confirmed that it was that of a Red-Tail. On July 14 three members of the Yorkton group also visited the nest. By this time the young hawks (two) were out of the nest, but were apparently still somewhere near, as all the time the visitors were present one of the adult hawks flew round in wide circles overhead, screaming shrilly. Bill Wilson and Michael Priestly climbed the tree and discovered the nest contained four freshly-killed young "gophers" (Richardson's Ground Squirrel) and the remains of one Sharp-tailed Grouse and many bones. The most interesting thing, however, was the fact that in the sparrow's nest, built into the foundation of the hawk's nest, was a dead, almost fully fledged young sparrow badly mutilated about the head. This was a most puzzling occurrence. Why had the presence of the sparrows been tolerated up to this point? Had the young hawks been trying their skill by attacking the young sparrows? The whole thing remains a mystery.

With regard to the sparrow's nest in the Swainson's Hawk's nest noted in 1944, the latter was situated in a dead poplar tree and had been occupied for several seasons. This spring we discovered that the Hawks (if it was the same pair) had apparently decided that the tree was no longer safe and a new nest had been constructed a few yards away in a living tree and at a lower level. The new nest also harboured the nest of a pair of English Sparrows!

Pintail and Hungarian Share Nest From E. W. Arnold, Valparaiso, comes this interesting note - "An odd incident took place here last spring. A Pintail Duck and a Hungarian Partridge were laying eggs in the same nest. I think that the duck was the intruder as there were eighteen partridge eggs and six duck eggs. The two birds seemed to take shifts in being on the nest, at least they did that for three days. I took a look at it about a week later, but only eggshells were left. I do not know what had happened to them."

Whooping Crane No nest of the Whooping Crane was located this year. This is hardly to be wondered at, considering the extent of the territory where they might nest and the fact that some birdmen believe that there are now less than fifty of these magnificent birds still in existence. Sight records were reported to the Provincial Museum from settled areas during the spring migration and it seems possible that one pair started to nest on a marsh at Fort a La Corne Forest Reserve in May. This marsh was afterwards badly flooded out and no sign of the birds was seen there later in June. Anyone having any information regarding the Whooping Crane is asked to communicate with Fred Bard, Curator, Provincial Museum, Regina.

1945 BIRD RECORDS OF INTEREST IN BRIEF

Black Duck A male bird showing no sign of molting, banded July 21 by J. H. Wilson at Leech Lake, Yorkton. An adult female banded by Stuart Houston at Rousay Lake, Yorkton, August 10, and a second female, molting and unable to fly, August 22. This is the game duck which largely replaces the mallard in Eastern Canada, not often reported for Saskatchewan. Plumages of both sexes the same. May be recognized as a very dark duck with light wing lining. Deep purple wing patch, no white bars.

Hooded Merganser Female banded at Leech Lake July 12. The smallest species of the "fish-eating" ducks with narrow, saw-like bills. Plumage of female greyish-brown, not in any way spectacular.

Turkey Vulture Many visitors to Madge Lake this year reported seeing large numbers of these huge birds sailing round high up in the sky.

Cooper's Hawk Five nesting records reported this summer in the south part of the province. Several sight records. A young bird discovered in a Yorkton duck trap and banded. Cooper's Hawk is the "chicken hawk" of Eastern Canada and is not common on the prairies, but at long intervals appears in large numbers. 1945 is apparently such a year.

Avocet Three seen on sandbar in Saskatchewan River above Saskatoon by F. Roy, May 13. "Is this not quite a distance north to find these birds?" asked Mr. Roy. W. Niven, Sheho, reports a flock of 20 present on a small alkali slough all summer. The eggs of the colony reported from Leech Lake, Yorkton, last spring, were completely destroyed by crows and only one Avocet was seen around the lake later in the summer.

Kingfisher F. Roy, Tullis, got his first nesting record of the Kingfisher for that district this summer. Nest was situated in a steep clay bank in a coulee near the Saskatchewan River.

Crested Flycatchers J. D. Richie, Wallwort, Tells us he has known this bird as a nesting species for several years.

Tanagers Western Tanager. Nest with four eggs found at Nipawin by M. G. Street. Placed at end of spruce bough about 20 feet from the ground.

Tanagers (continued)
Scarlet Tanager. Reported from Nipawin and the Assiniboine Valley near Togo.

Lark Sparrow Colony found on hills north of the San, Fort Qu'Appelle, by E. M. Callin. This would appear to be the most northerly point reached by this handsome sparrow. Formerly confined to S.W. part of the province, but now rapidly extending its range.

Smith's Longspur Seen Sept. 1, by W. Niven, Sheho. Mr. Niven knows this rarely recorded longspur as a spring and fall migrant on the fields of his farm, six miles out of Sheho.

PLANT AND INSECT NOTES

The late spring of 1945 had, of course, a marked effect on plant life. Wild Roses were flowers of July rather than June, and other flowers of early summer overlapped with the first asters and sunflowers. Each family of butterflies was also said to have come on the wing about two weeks later than usual. Frosts in early June caught the Saskatoon blossoms in most places. Most abundant fruit in eastern Saskatchewan was the wild raspberry which now seems to have recovered from the effects of the dry years.

It was good to hear of yellow Lady's Slippers appearing in many places in greater abundance than for many seasons. Mrs. E. B. Flock while holidaying at Recanville reported finding Lady's Slipper plants a foot or more high and bearing huge blossoms growing in clumps of ten or twelve in the tall grass along the railroad right of way. To her surprise she learned that the right of way is burned over every year and yet no harm seems to come to the orchids. "And, best of all, they seem to be safe from overpicking," she wrote.

Two other charming native wild flowers, the Shooting Star, and the Mealy or Bird's-eye Primrose also bloomed in great profusion in many meadows this summer.

In the north country mosquitoes apparently reached an "all time high" for ferocity. We doubted some of the tales seeping out, but when M. G. Street, Nipawin, stated that mosquitoes had even stopped him "birding", we knew they must be really bad!

A Wasp Episode

On the Labour Day week-end, while hunting arrow heads on a sand blow along the Assiniboine, we watched one of the digger wasps hard at work.

When first noted the wasp had just begun to excavate a vertical shaft in the fine loose sand. The insect, black and scarcely half an inch in length, was rapidly digging similar to the manner in which a dog digs for a gopher. Working from one spot, the sand flew from between her front feet and was tossed fully three or four inches behind her, over the edge of the hole. As the incline became more steep and sand tumbled to the bottom of the hole, she would run backwards up the side and begin a new trough about an inch from the rim.

When the funnel-shaped hole was about three inches deep, and approximately the same in diameter, the wasp uncovered a smooth green caterpillar, still apparently alive.

Turning the larva over on its side the wasp grasped it by the head and pressed her abdomen against its thorax. We could not observe whether the wasp was administrating a sting to paralyse the larva or was depositing an egg. This action was repeated several times.

Although the caterpillar was many times her own weight and over an inch in length, the wasp dragged it out of the hole. Then she got astride it! The wasp reminded us of a small plane with an oversized bomb load, the caterpillar being almost three times her own length.

By some unseen method the larva was underslung to the body of the wasp - probably being held in her strong mandibles. Running on all legs the wasp struck out rapidly across the sand blow. Whenever she met an obstruction in her path she would drop the caterpillar and scout the possibilities of an easier route. At every ten or fifteen feet she would stop for a rest remaining astride the larva.

After watching the wasp carry her heavy load for forty or fifty feet we lost sight of her when she ran into a clump of grass.

Cliff Shaw.

FUR NOT FEATHERS

Bats We received some interesting records of bats this year. Earliest "first seen" date was supplied by J. Hubbard Jr., Grenfell, who saw a bat flying around May 3 and 10 (our previous early record was May 7). On June 26 an injured Hoary Bat was picked up in a Yorkton garden. This bat was forwarded to Dr. Anderson of the National Museum, Ottawa, for positive identification. A second Hoary Bat was found lying stunned on the sidewalk a week or so later. This animal recovered consciousness and was subsequently liberated.

The Hoary Bat is a woodland species and the largest bat found in Canada. Dr. Anderson stated in his reply "It is always considered to be rather rare, but that may be because it flies high and usually hangs up in a thick clump of leaves in a tree and apparently does not go into houses and caves as many of the smaller bats do. A bat might get a broken wing in a number of ways. As you suggested, a cat might have caught this particular bat and then not relished the musky odour."

In the middle of July two bats were seen for several days hanging high up in a boulevard maple in Yorkton. One was finally captured and found to be a Silver-haired Bat. It was placed by Mrs.Priestly on a small twig in a sealer so that the neighborhood children could have a chance to see it. Then at dusk it was transferred to the branch of a maple tree. After a little while it darted up into the air, circled round the yard as if getting its bearing, and then vanished. Two other Silver-haired Bats were picked up in downtown Yorkton, August 22, after a sudden heavy shower around 8 A.M.

A record of an apparent Fall migration of bats was reported by Gus Yaki, Sandwith, who wrote that "bats were flying around everyone's home here last evening (August 23). No bats have been seen or heard of in this district for about six years."

As we have mentioned before in the "Blue Jay", all western bats seem migratory and as far as we know no hibernating bat has ever been found on the prairies. Elsewhere the majority of bats spend the winter in caves where the temperature keeps just above freezing, so it is doubtful if any barn or building in the West would fulfil these requirements.

Badgers Dick Bird has obtained some good movie "shots" of badgers at work near Buena Vista beach and was surprised one day to receive a social call from one of these animals. "Three of us were standing on the veranda" he writes, "when a badger wandered round the cottage and even started up the veranda steps. He looked right at us, decided it was too much trouble to climb the five steps, so removed his front paws from the bottom step and ambled round the front yard and away."

Jumping Mice Mrs. Bilsbury, Grenfell, states "These pretty creatures seem to come and go in cycles. In abundance for a couple of years and then none to be seen. For instance, in 1943 and 1944, there were lots of them. While berrying I saw them flash through the grasses and several have been drowned in the well by creeping under the cover."

Moose Two bull moose were seen, September 3, going round the south end of Leech Lake, Yorkton, by J. H. Wilson. They were also noted from farms north and west and were evidently following an old trail of these animals leading from the Riding Mountain up to the Beaver Hills and Nut Mountain area.

SASKATCHEWAN BIRD BANDERS

By C. Stuart Houston

5. Charles F. Holmes, DOLLARD Charles F. Holmes, well-known naturalist of Dollard, Sask. has possessed a banding permit since 1932, and since that time has banded 32 birds of 7 species.

Mr. Holmes has not had much time for bird banding, as he devotes most of his spare time to his scientific bird collection, in which he has 500 specimens representing nearly every species to be found in the Cypress Hills region. Incidentally, Mr. Holmes states that he would be pleased to show this collection to anyone visiting the Dollard district.

Although he has banded comparatively few birds, Mr. Holmes has banded three rather unusual species: Red-breasted Nuthatch (1); Virginia Rail (1); and Prairie Falcon (2).

He has also had some good recovery records from Swainson's Hawks.

From 16 birds of this species banded, he has heard from five: two from Montana, one from Oklahoma, one from White Bear, Sask., and one from Ray, N. Dakota. This latter bird was nearly four years old when shot.

6. W. F. Hammond, CUPAR W. F. Hammond, of Cupar, Sask., has banded 254 birds of 13 species, since he began banding in 1932. The greatest number of species he has banded are the Crow (150), followed by Barn Swallow (24) and Rusty Blackbird (23).

Ten Crows were subsequently heard from, two having been shot in Oklahoma, two in Kansas, and one in Nebraska, while five others returned to nest near where they were raised. One bird returned to Cupar three years after it was banded, while another returned to Dysart after a two-year interval, and two were shot at Markinch, four and five years after having been banded, respectively. The fifth bird, also banded as a nestling, was shot at Grenfell, Sask., slightly over 50 miles away "as the crow flies", the year after it was banded.

These records seem further proof of the theory that juvenile birds return to the approximate vicinity of where they were hatched, usually within a 25-mile radius. Through bird banding, we now have definite proof that most ADULT birds return to exactly the same location year after year, but there is still much to be learned as to where young birds nest in their first year in relation to their place of origin.

A Swainson's Hawk banded by Mr. Hammond at Cupar was shot at La Bolt, South Dakota, and a Mallard was found dead at Ord, Nebraska. A Barn Swallow, banded in 1932, was caught again in 1933 and 1936 at the same place where it had been banded.

NEWS OF OUR NATURALISTS

Dick Bird, A.R.P.S., F.Z.S., is at present showing his colour "movies" of Saskatchewan wildlife in many western Canadian towns and cities in a two-month's lecture tour sponsored by the Associated Canadian Clubs.

A. J. Breitung of Tisdale, who last year was assistant botanist with a field party to the Yukon from the National Museum, Ottawa, has this summer been collecting plant specimens for the National Museum at Banff and Jasper.

Dr. A. L. Rand Associate Zoologist at the National Museum has been doing field work this summer in southern Alberta and south-western Saskatchewan. We understand he was making a survey of the Prong-horn Antelope population.

INFORMATION PLEASE

Do any of our members know of places where garter snakes gather for hibernation? In a recent magazine article it was pointed out that, while preposterous snake stories still persist, a few authentic facts seem constantly overlooked - the fact, for example, that "snakes sometimes hibernate in great writhing masses, of possibly 300 to 400 in a ball." We have heard of one such occurrence for Saskatchewan and will give details in a later issue of the "Blue Jay."

Were Burrowing Owls down in numbers this year? Dick Bird wrote in July, "Most-missed friends so far are the Burrowing Owls . . . we haven't seen one and we have searched all the likely places." It then struck us that no correspondents had been making any reference to these interesting little Owls.

Has anyone had any experience raising the Western Red Lily from seed? Last year we supplied G. F. Ledingham with seed from Red Lilies grown in a garden from transplanted bulbs. This seed did not germinate. Recently W. Yanchinski sent us seeds of wild Lilies from Naicam and we are hoping for better luck. In any case growing lilies from seed is a job requiring much patience, as it takes three or four years before the plants bear flowers.

The Provincial Museum is anxious to obtain specimens of the skulls of the weasel, woodchuk, pocket-gopher and badger for a study collection. So here is a chance for younger members to contribute something of value to the Museum.

Each Fall we get reports of Golden Eagles seen in migration. We are inclined to believe that some of these birds may be young Bald Eagles - a species which still nests along the Churchill River and other northern localities. The adult Bald Eagle, with white head and tail, is unmistakeable but young birds are wholly dark and are often confused with adult Golden Eagles. Actually the under plumage of young Bald Eagles is grayish, but this is not always easily observed, depending on the light. The flight of the Bald Eagle is also said to be more steady and direct than that of the Golden, but here again these birds are too rarely seen to make comparative study possible. (Note: The Golden Eagle is most likely to be seen in winter. Young Golden Eagles have a white patch on the undersurface of the wings and a conspicuous dark terminal band to the tail.)

We should be glad to receive "first seen" records of winter birds - Snowy Owl, Pine Grosbeaks, Bohemian Waxwings, and others.

In reply to our query re Turtles occurring north of the Qu'Appelle Valley, Miss Elaine Culbert, now at Biggar, tells us that four years ago, when she was teaching at Gerald, a Painted Turtle was discovered crawling along the railroad track. This turtle, it was believed, had followed the Cutarm Creek up from the Qu'Appelle, as others had been seen along the creek at different times. (Gerald is about a mile east of the Cutarm Valley, and some 16 miles north of the Qu'Appelle.) Has anyone else any turtle records?

GENERAL

Christmas Bird Census We shall be organizing our fourth Annual Christmas Bird Census and hope that all who have taken part before will be out in force, as well as many of our new members. This winter count results not only in some interesting data regarding our winter bird population, but it can also be recommended most highly as an excellent pastime for the day after Christmas!

The three previous counts have produced a list of no less than forty-two different species of birds found in Saskatchewan in the very depth of winter. Of course, not all of these have been recorded for any one year--it is characteristic of the winter birds which come down from the north that they may occur in very large numbers one season and be entirely absent the following year. In 1943, for example, Redpolls were the most commonly noted bird, but in 1944 they were only listed in two localities. Also, "wintering summer birds" seem to survive some seasons far better than others - last year quite a few reports of robins, meadowlarks and even a flicker came in.

The count should be made any day between Christmas and New Year inclusive. Every species of bird seen should be recorded as well as the number of each species seen, for example, "Blue Jay, 2; Chickadee, 22." Notes should also be made as to weather, wind, temperature, number of miles travelled, and time the observer was out of doors. If a return trip is made over the same route, only the count made either going or returning should be reported. We shall be grateful if observers will send in their lists as soon as compiled so that they may appear in the January issue of the "Blue Jay."

Feeding Birds Mrs. W. Roach, Okla, has found a most satisfactory "bird cake" can be made by mixing weed seeds gathered at the threshing machine, with melted suet. When hard, it can be broken in pieces and tied with string to the trees or the clothes line. And do the chickadees appreciate it! She has found pop-corn and sunflower seeds put through the meat chopper a good mixture for the feeding tray. We also came across a new suggestion recently, that "peanut butter, in shallow jar-tops, attracts many winter birds." This might be worth trying - if the younger members of the family will co-operate!

BOOKS

"Three Mile Bend" by Kerry Wood. An ideal Christmas gift for anyone who enjoys the out of doors. A collection of short articles on different nature topics all linked with Three Mile Bend on the Red Deer River, Alberta. Some are based on radio talks already given over the C.B.C. by Mr. Wood. We hope he will go on writing about Western Canadian birds and animals.(Ryerson Press, Toronto.$2.50)

Back Issues of the "Blue Jay" H. C. Oberholser, Curator of Ornithology, Cleveland Museum of Natural History, U.S.A., wants a copy of the first issue of the "Blue Jay" to complete his file. If anyone can supply a copy of Vol. 1, No. 1, we shall be most grateful.

A few copies of the following issues of the "Blue Jay" are available at twenty-five cents each -- Vol. 1, Nos. 3 & 4; Vol. 2, Nos. 2, 3, & 4; Vol. 3, Nos. 1, 2, 3 & 4. Apply Miss Ruth Beck, Secretary-Treasurer, 33 Fourth Avenue, Yorkton.

Will members please make special note that all material for the "Blue Jay" should be sent to Mrs. I. M. Priestly, 40 Agricultural Avenue, Yorkton, and all subscriptions and business letters to Miss Ruth Beck, Sec.-Treasurer.

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